

CIACO NID 81

November 28, 1981

POLAND: Consideration of Antistrike Law

Party leader Jaruzelski yesterday increased pressure on Solidarity's moderates to control strikes by announcing at the Central Committee plenum that he has instructed the government to present a draft antistrike law to parliament.

Jaruzelski thus fulfilled a pledge made in late October, when he promised to seek such binding legislation if a parliamentary resolution calling for a voluntary end to strikes was ignored. Strike activity subsequently slowed down gradually.

There currently are few economically significant strikes, but Jaruzelski realizes that there are many issues that could lead to new walkouts. He also probably wants to avoid criticism that he is not willing to back up his tough language with actions.

Although details of the proposed law are not yet available, it is likely to be confined to laying the groundwork for prohibiting some strikes and perhaps to giving parliament the right to limit the duration of all strikes. Such provisions were included in a draft trade union law--agreed to by Solidarity earlier this year--which was never enacted.

A total ban on strikes would be strongly resisted by Solidarity's leadership, would scuttle current union-government talks, and would provoke considerable opposition in parliament. Polish officials seem generally aware that production losses are due more to the lack of raw materials and spare parts than to strikes.

Meanwhile, other speakers during the first day of the plenum indicated the regime will continue to act aggressively toward so-called "antisocialist" political activists. A party secretary said that during the past three weeks the government had begun surveillance of "opposition groups" and started investigations of almost 400 "crimes" against the state.

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